

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 118140
ORIGIN NEA-11

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:RGH

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PA/PRS - MR. CARTER

H - MR. FLATEN

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

NEA/EGY - MR. MARTHINSEN

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----054540 092230Z /61

O 092144Z MAY 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USNATO

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
NSC WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR
DOD
USICA

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 9

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MAY 9, 1978. FYI ONLY,
SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS, IF THAT IS THE
RIGHT WORD, WITH THE SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES ON WHAT
USED TO BE CALLED THE PACKAGE SALES?

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A. I WAS JUST GETTING A READ-OUT FROM WHAT THE SECRETARY
SAID. I DON'T SEE ANYTHING VERY NEW AT ALL IN WHAT HE
SAID UP THERE.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ABOUT ONE ASPECT IN PARTICULAR.
SENATOR CHURCH THIS MORNING INDICATED STRONGLY THAT HE FELT
THERE SHOULD BE SOME LIMIT OR RESTRICTION ON SAUDI ARABIA'S
FREEDOM TO PURCHASE OTHER JETS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES DURING
THE TIME OF DELIVERY OF THE F-15'S BY THE UNITED STATES.

IS THIS A POSSIBILITY?

I MEAN ARE YOU SEEKING AN ASSURANCE OF THIS KIND FROM THE
SAUDIS?

A. AGAIN, THE SECRETARY WAS ASKED A CLOSELY RELATED
QUESTION UP THERE, AND I DON'T HAVE THE EXACT WORDING OF
HIS RESPONSE.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT HIS FEELING WAS THAT PENDING A
DECISION ON THESE, THE SAUDIS SAY THEY HAVE NO INTENTION

OF GOING WITH OTHERS OR LOOKING ELSEWHERE.

Q. PENDING DELIVERY?

A. PENDING DELIVERY. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO WAY TO SAY WHAT A SOVEREIGN COUNTRY MAY OR MAY NOT DO IN TERMS OF ITS ARMS NEEDS IN THE FUTURE BEYOND THAT.

Q. SO, WHAT YOU ARE SAYING IS THAT THERE IS NO WAY THAT WE CAN GET ANY KIND OF A BINDING GUARANTEE FROM THE SAUDIS THAT THEY WON'T BUY FRENCH JETS IF THEY GET THESE?

A. I CAN'T SAY THAT. I DON'T KNOW. I WAS TRYING TO PARAPHRASE WHAT THE SECRETARY JUST GOT THROUGH SAYING.

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FRANKLY, THAT QUESTION HASN'T ARISEN BEFORE FOR ME, AND I DO NOT KNOW OF ANY PLANS FOR SUCH A BINDING AGREEMENT.

Q. THE SENATORS WHO TALKED TO YOU THIS MORNING TALKED ABOUT AN IMMINENT COMPROMISE PACKAGE. I WOULD LIKE TO GO BACK TO THE QUESTION OF NUMBERS. THERE WAS A REPORT ABOUT 20 MORE F-15'S FOR SAUDI ARABIA. CAN YOU ADDRESS THAT?

A. NO, NOT REALLY. WE ARE, AS WE HAVE SAID, CONSULTING WITH CONGRESS AND LISTENING TO THE CONCERNS AND VIEW-POINTS OF THE CONGRESSMEN. IF THERE IS ANYTHING WHICH ARISES FROM THAT, I AM SURE IT WILL BE ANNOUNCED. I DONT HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY HERE.

Q. ARE YOU CONSULTING WITH THE SAUDIS AT THIS MOMENT OR IN THE LAST DAY OR TWO REGARDING THEIR INTENTION WHETHER TO BUY YETS FROM FRANCE OR ANOTHER COUNTRY?

A. I DONT KNOW ABOUT THE CONTEXT. YOU MENTION THE 24 HOUR, 48-HOUR BUSINESS. I KNOW THAT WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH EACH OF THE PARTIES THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE ARMS SALES. I AM NOT AWARE OF RECENT CONVERSATIONS ON THE SUBJECTS YOU HAVE RAISED.

Q. I WONDER IF YOU CAN EXPLAIN TO ME HOW IT IS POSSIBLE,

ON THE ONE HAND, FOR US NOT TO BE ABLE TO INTERFERE WITH THE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF A NATION WITH REGARD TO THEIR ABILITY TO PURCHASE WEAPONS FROM SOMEONE ELSE, BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND, TO DEMAND THAT THEY NOT DEPLOY CERTAIN WEAPONS THAT WE SEND THEM WITHIN THEIR OWN GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES?

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A. OF COURSE. TO DEMAND IS A PHRASE THAT YOU USE. I
MEAN, IT IS A NEGOTIATED USE OF WEAPONS THAT WE PROVIDE.

Q. COULD WE NOT NEGOTIATE IT WITHIN THE SAME CONTEXT
THAT THEY DO NOT PURCHASE WEAPONS --

A. BUT WE ARE NOT PROVIDING THE OTHER WEAPONS. THERE
IS AFTER ALL IN A CONTRACT BETWEEN TWO PARTIES INVOLVING
THOSE TWO PARTIES A POSSIBILITY FOR CLAUSES IN A CONTRACT.
IT IS A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT, HOWEVER, TO ADD A CLAUSE
RESTRICTING THEIR ABILITY TO DEAL WITH ANOTHER PARTY
IN A CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT. I SIMPLY DONT KNOW WHAT A
PRECEDENT WOULD BE FOR THAT.

Q. IT MIGHT BE MORE DIFFICULT, BUT IT IS CERTAINLY NOT
OUTSIDE OF THE BOUNDS OF REASONABLENESS.

A. I THINK THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THAT WOULD BE
CONSIDERED REASONABLE WOULD BE UP TO THE COUNTRY WITH
WHOM YOU WERE TALKING. I, AGAIN, SIMPLY DONT KNOW A
PRECEDENT FOR OUR TELLING OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE BUYING
FROM US THAT THEY CAN'T BUY FROM ANYBODY ELSE.

Q. I KNOW, BUT WHAT I AM REALLY ASKING IS WHETHER THE
UNITED STATES HAS ANY INDICATION OF EVEN TRYING TO
IMPOSE THAT KIND OF A CONDITION UPON THE SALE?

A. AS I SAY, I AM NOT AWARE OF SUCH A RESTRICTION.

VANCE

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